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NAMASTE!!

Hello Everyone,

Happy Nepali New Year 2068!!! The new year has arrived along with three new staff members - Rebecca Walton as Assistant Manager and Social Manager, Jurgen Zwart as Assistant Manager and Henry Guyer also as Assistant Manager. Now the Nepal team has grown everyone is so excited for the busy months ahead. Read on to find out a little bit more about each of the new staff members.

April and May have been very busy months with lots going on including painting in Bhaktapur, a party to see in the new year and of course the arrival of many new volunteers. We warmly welcome those who have just landed and look forward to meeting those of you who are yet to land!

In this edition of the newsletter we have stories from volunteers as well as a special mention of those who have given donations to their placements and also pictures from all of the events that have been happening.

To find out what will be happening in Kathmandu Valley over the coming months check out the final pages.

Additionally you can click over and have a look at Projects Abroad Nepal's Country Blog <http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/groups/3014/Nepal> to read about the latest goings-on in Nepal!

Enjoy ☺

Projects Abroad Team, Nepal.

Welcoming the New Staff Members...

Jurgen...

Hi Everyone!!

Hereby I would like to introduce myself as one of the new staff members of the Project Abroad team Nepal! My name is Jurgen, I am 27 years old, and I'm from the Netherlands. I am a graduate from the Law School Groningen. After I finished my studies I started working in a Law Firm in the Netherlands but during my time there I thought back to my plans which I had during my studies; I wanted to travel, see things but I also wanted to do something for other people. I didn't do this during or after my studies so when I came across the website of Projects Abroad I knew this was exactly what I was looking for. So I quit my job and went to Ghana.

I chose Ghana first of all because they had a Human Rights Program, and I thought it would be nice to also do something with my background, but also because I had never been to Africa before and was really curious about it. My work there was to make people aware of their basic human rights by giving workshops where we explained what human rights are and how people could access these rights. I also did research into child trafficking, which involved trying to find out from which country the children mostly came from and what was the best way to stop this. In the end we handed the research to the government with the hope they are going to do something with it. Besides that I started my own project. A lot of people in Ghana won't go to court when they have a legal problem, first of all because a lot of problems are 'solved' by the town elders, which is a corrupted system, second because it's too expensive for most people to go to court. During a talk with a judge I found out that mediation is an effective method but there are simply not enough mediators and most of them are not willing to go to the rural parts to do mediation on the spot. I decided to ask for funding for mediation training for a couple of volunteers and then go to the small towns and try to do mediation on 'minor' problems like child maintenance and intestacy.

I'm so happy to say that the project was a big success, a lot of problems which otherwise wouldn't have been solved for a long time got solved and thereby we helped a lot of people. I'm proud that Projects Abroad Ghana is going on with the project even now I have finished my placement there. Obviously I had a great time in Ghana, did a lot that helped people, made a lot of friends and saw incredible things, so I asked Projects Abroad if they had a job for me. I didn't have to think long when they said they did and offered me the job here in Nepal.....so here I am as the new Assistant Manager. I will do my best and try to help you guys everywhere to make your time here in Nepal as worthwhile and rewarding as possible.

I wish you all an amazing time here in Nepal.

Cheers Jurgen

Henry...

Dear Katmandu,

We have all navigated various roads to get to Katmandu and looking out upon the Boudha Stupa on my very first night of joining the staff at Projects Abroad, I also asked myself how I got here. So here's a concise explanation of the road I had to travel to get here...please excuse the haphazard penmanship; I am still feeling the effects of jet-lag and a profound lack of sleep.

I was offered a position with Projects Abroad while volunteering in Ethiopia earlier this year while I was completing a journalism internship in Addis Ababa. The offer came out of the blue for me and while I deliberated and debated for a few minutes, I knew that the offer of working in Nepal was an opportunity I couldn't turn away.

I am 25 years old and of Swiss-Indonesian descent. Most of my growing up was done in a mountain city called Bandung on the island of Java where I went to an international school until I graduated. For a reason that somehow escapes me to this day, I somehow managed to convince myself to trade in the tropics of Indonesia for the freezing winters of Montreal to further my studies. Although I had an amazing five years there studying Sociology and Film Studies, I'm glad

that I never have to battle the city's subzero winters anymore...hopefully the Katmandu Valley isn't a return to those arduous and glacial days; who knows what the infamous monsoon season will bring!

After emerging from the ice with my bachelor's degree, I first moved to Cologne, Germany to freshen up my German and then after ten months decided to move to Paris with my girlfriend. For almost two years, we worked a series of jobs amongst a backdrop of wine-stained nights, croissant breakfasts, and piping hot bowls of escargot. It was then that I began to write for various online magazines on travel, art, and culture, which inspired me to get more serious about journalism. Once I found the journalism program in Ethiopia, while my girlfriend had chosen a Human Rights program in Togo, all our efforts went to saving up enough money for our African journey. The placement didn't disappoint. I researched and wrote my own articles, such as pieces about the situation of landmines in the country, and Ethiopia's little known Armenian population and their hidden historic relationship with the region. The profound influence that volunteering in Africa had on us is incalculable and when we were then offered to prolong our journey with Projects Abroad as members of staff, we knew there was only ever going to be one outcome.

Nepal had always been like a dream, distant yet attainable, mythical yet genuine. I can't wait to immerse myself in this land and this work, which, after 24 hours, has already left lasting impressions.

I look forward to meeting all of you, those already here and those of you yet to come. A toast to all of us!

Cheers,
Henry Guyer

Rebecca...

Hi all!

My name is Rebecca and I am one of the latest recruits to the Projects Abroad team here in Nepal. I have been here almost a month now and am settling in very well. Home for me is the UK where I am currently studying Geography and History at The University of Liverpool but am taking a break at the moment to get some work experience. I was so excited when I found out I would be coming to Nepal, and having very little previous knowledge about the country only added to my anticipation. So far I love it here and look forward to becoming more familiar with my new home.

I have been involved with Projects Abroad ever since I did volunteering two years ago. When I knew that I wanted to take a gap year between school and university I also knew that I wanted to make a worthwhile contribution whilst I travelled. I chose to do my placement in India because the people and their culture have always intrigued me and I also wanted to experience an environment as different as possible from my home country in every way, including the food, religion, culture and landscape. My host family and schools were located in southern Kerala which is known by the locals as 'God's Own Country'. I spent my time working in two different schools teaching children from the ages 3 to 18. I can honestly say that I loved my time there, meeting some of the nicest people and having the experience of a lifetime, and so when I left I vowed to return one day. As of yet, I have not had the time or the funds to return but so far being in Nepal feels very similar to being back in India. Nevertheless I can already appreciate the many ways in which Nepal is different and I cannot wait to see what else this amazing country has to show me.

My other job title aside from Assistant Manager will be Social Manager, which means I will be in charge of arranging trips, writing the newsletter, and updating the blogs and Facebook page. If you have any suggestions for any of these please just let me know, and also be prepared for me to ask you to write a little something to include in the next editions 😊

Thanks for reading this and I look forward to meeting all of you, current and future volunteers too!

Rebecca



Nepali New Year HAPPY 2068!!!!



On New Years day, 14th April 2011, 25 volunteers and staff gathered at a local Nepali restaurant to see in the new year in true traditional fashion. With a hearty meal of Dal Bhatt, and a constant flow of raksi (homemade alcoholic drink) served in shot form, the whole night was a great success, full of entertainment and joy!!! A fantastic start to 2068!! I hope this year brings great things for you all, Caroline Scheffer.

Volunteer Stories

Operatie Nepal by Linda Hauer

Mijn eerste drie weken in Nepal waren heerlijk! Nieuwe mensen ontmoeten, het vrijwilligerswerk, de weekendtrips, de nieuwe cultuur en omgeving! Elke dag was een feestje waar ik heel erg van genoot, totdat ik opeens die stekende pijn in mn buik voelde... Ik heb het een paar dagen proberen te negeren, maar toen ik 's nachts niet meer kon slapen van de pijn heb ik de volgende ochtend Anne Sophie (van Projects Abroad) gebeld dat ik naar een dokter wilde. Binnen een half uur stonden Ruth en Daisy met een taxi voor de deur om met me mee naar het ziekenhuis te gaan. Daar bleek al snel dat het om een acute blinde darm ging die er zo snel mogelijk uit moest. Ik was nogal bang voor het ziekenhuis en had veel pijn, dus ik was heel blij dat Ruth en Daisy bij me waren om alle zaken te regelen en – belangrijker nog – me af te leiden met grappige verhalen.

Nog diezelfde dag werd ik geopereerd en Daisy en Ruth zijn bij me gebleven tot na de operatie. Toen ik wakker werd (in de 'ambassador suite' die zij voor me hadden geregeld: de grootste en luxste kamer van het ziekenhuis!!) stond er een groot ballonnen hart naast mn bed met een lieve tekst en een kaartje! Dat vond ik

echt zo lief! Ik voelde me namelijk best verloren; mn familie en vrienden aan de andere kant van de wereld en ik lag alleen in een ziekenhuis in Nepal.. op zo'n moment wil je gewoon thuis zijn en bekenden om je heen hebben. Ik heb 5 dagen in het ziekenhuis gelegen en elke dag kwamen er mensen bij me op bezoek. De meiden van Projects Abroad kwamen elke dag langs, nieuwe vrienden die ik had leren kennen kwamen op bezoek en ook mn gastgezin kwam op bezoek met zelfgemaakte rijstepap en soep. Dat deed me echt heel goed! Zoveel bezoek, zoveel aandacht, cadeautjes en belangstelling! Hartverwarmend gewoon!

En ook na mn ontslag uit het ziekenhuis heeft Projects Abroad me geholpen met het regelen van mn verzekering en hoefde ik niet één keer alleen naar het ziekenhuis toen bijvoorbeeld de hechtingen eruit moesten.

Natuurlijk had ik liever niet in het ziekenhuis beland, maar ik vind het wel heel bijzonder dat ik nu heb gezien hoe Projects Abroad er voor je is als je ze nodig hebt!

En met name Daisy, Ruth, Carolein en Anne Sophie wil ik heel erg bedanken voor al hun liefde en aandacht! Want ook al is het voor jullie misschien 'gewoon werk', zo voelde het voor mij niet, ik vind jullie hartjes van goud!

Linda Hauer.



Stupa Community Hospital by Daniël Lambrichts

From February 21st to March 18th I worked as a volunteer at the Stupa Community Hospital. My supervisor, Dr. Swasti, had the job of helping me gain experience in the medical world. Because I didn't get access to a medical course in September of 2010, I decided to take a gap-year. I first came into contact with Projects Abroad thanks to Google. Later on I went to a meeting organized in a hostel in Amsterdam, where I met people who worked for Projects Abroad and volunteers who had already travelled. They inspired me, and I got a good view of the organization. I carried this good impression with me for a month, in which I was in doubt about my placement and the country I wanted to go to. I soon realized that I wanted to do a medical project, for it may work in my advantage to get into medicine in 2011. I also decided to do a care project, just so that it was not only hospital work, and I got to see a school or orphanage too. It took me much longer to decide which country I wanted to volunteer in. The two countries that I liked the most were Ghana and Nepal. Don't ask me why, but mainly because of stories of other volunteers on the Projects Abroad website. In the end I choose to do a 1 month medical project and 1 month care project in the beautiful country of Nepal.

So here I am, back to my supervisor and placement. The first day I was shown around the hospital, which was a complete shock for me. Let's just say that the medical care the people can get there is sufficient for their needs (in most cases), but compared to "Western" hospitals (as in Europe, Canada, US) it's very primitive and basic. The hospital is located in the Stupa area, and in front of the building there is a very busy road. On that road I walked from and to the hospital every day. A 30-minute walk that was never the same. It was fun to see the daily life of so many Nepali. And I think, based on the stares and smiling looks on their faces, it was good fun for them to see me too. Tall Dutch boys catch the eye here.

Because Stupa is mainly a Budhistic area, a lot of Lamas and Sherpas came in at the outpatients department everyday. In that OPD is where I spent most of my time with Dr. Swasti. People came in with their complaints and Dr. Swasti did his job. Most of the time he explained everything he said or did to me, but after a while, he stopped explaining the basic complaints (such as colds and fevers) people had. I didn't mind that because I knew everything about it, thanks to his lessons, and even made me feel a little bit professional. I didn't get much to do though, which was a little disappointing to me, because I had high hopes to be an active volunteer. But soon after, I realized that I could learn a lot from observing to. I asked questions almost every moment, or about every move that the doctor made, and he, luckily, was patient enough to answer every question. Due to all these question and answer sessions I learned a lot about common complaints of the human body, it's anatomy and even

about some rare diseases.

After we were done at OPD, we would go on the daily rounds. One level higher (the hospital had quite a few levels and a big atrium in the middle) was the medical ward; a female ward, which we would always visit first (ladies first), and a male ward. Dr. Swasti explained to me about the ways of curing the people who were admitted and showed me their files. And when a patient was there for a longer time, he often taught me about the development of the disease they had, and the way they should react to medicines. After half an hour wandering around between nurses, other doctors and families of the patients, we went down to see the last few patients at the OPD. As a lot of the patients had to go for X-rays, blood tests or ECG (that's way of getting a diagnosis here), these same people would come back at that same time to find out about their results and to get medicines or be cured in another way.

After that it was lunch time; time for me to go and look for a restaurant nearby, or just by a little snack at the supermarket. When lunch break was over, I would return to the hospital and spend some time in either the X-ray department or the Emergency Ward. One day I walked into the X-ray department and asked the radiotherapist if he could show me around. After seeing the whole process of making an X-ray and him teaching me about all the aspects of his work, we decided to hang out more often. The radiotherapist (Mr. Kuber) was a young guy, who worked in this hospital and also in another one. He was very bright and next to that a very nice and funny guy. I learned a lot through hanging out with him at his department!

At the Emergency Ward it was much more quiet. Usually there was not much more to do than talk with doctors (many of which were part-timers, so there were a lot of different faces), about their reasons for becoming a doctor, special medical cases they have seen and, of course, about soccer too. This was the regular way of spending my days and learning through asking and observing. But in the last week I was very lucky to see some surgeries. I was allowed to watch a haemorrhoidectomy and also a patient with a cyst on his testis, which had to be taken away for biopsy. It was very interesting and quite an experience (for they were the first surgeries I ever observed) to be in the Operating Theatre, talking with the surgeon, while he was doing his job. He taught me lots (the first thing was: "DON'T TOUCH THE GREEN!!", meaning don't touch anything that has been sterilised!) about surgeries in common, but also about the specifics of the surgeries.

In the end I can say that my time at the hospital was a very good experience. I learned a lot and I am glad that I made my first steps into the medical world here in Nepal (it can only get more sophisticated from now on!). I hope this experience will work to my advantage when applying for my medical course. If after all it doesn't, at least I had a very good learning experience!

Daniël Lambrichts (Holland)

Volunteer Donations

Volunteering in itself is always a fantastic way to help people that are less fortunate than ourselves but this month there have been a few volunteers in particular who have contributed further to their placements. The whole team just want to give a special thanks to everyone!!! These contributions are very gratefully received and we hope you realise the amazing difference you are making.

MSPN

Anne and Naomi Chambers are mother and daughter who have been supporting a little boy, Sanju at MSPN, for a number of years. Ranju and the rest of the team at the centre would like to thank Anne and Naomi for all of their help and financial donations. It has made a massive difference to Sanju's life and the continuation of his care at MSPN.

NRH

Kornelia Arnulf has donated the following:

Infant scale, adult scale, snacks for fieldtrip, present for a child that left NRH, projector (for presentations), money for two families in emergency fund (10,000 per family; these are families that are not finished with their treatment and the money goes to these families in cases of emergencies). She also donated a fair amount of money for the deaf school painting; paint, brushes, rollers, masks etc. Thank you so much!!!!

Leaving of Joanne (teacher trainer) and Marlou, who were the first volunteers to leave one of our new teaching placements at Clark Memorial School. There was a leaving program organized by the children and the following is one of the child's speeches:

*"Namaste/Good afternoon to all my teachers and friends. I am Sanila Syantan from grade 5. I am going to express some of the feelings of the students. First of all, I would like to thank Miss Joanne Bean and Miss Marlou who taught us so many good things in very simple ways. We got a valuable opportunity to learn new things from you all. Thank you very much for your kind help and giving your valuable time for us. We wish you all the best for your success. We will all miss you.
Thank you."*

Dirty Weekend

Painting at a deaf school in Bhaktapur



Yesterday, on April 16th, we went painting and as it was National Volunteer Week we decided to contribute to a deaf school in Bhaktapur, a historical city just outside of Kathmandu. They requested we paint their classrooms as they had seen the work we had done in Bhaktapur CBR a couple of months before. So mix two good reasons together and off we went! Off to Bhaktapur at 8.30am, with nine volunteers and four staff members. By the time we arrived it was already around 10am, so we immediately started taking all the tables, chairs, posters, school boards etc out of the school and followed this with some serious wall scrubbing. Masks and gloves were a real necessity, the Kathmandu pollution was nothing compared to all the dust coming off the walls! Anyway, after scrubbing we got ourselves some rollers, big brushes and huge buckets of white paint; yes we would really contribute here as the walls looked terrible, old, dirty and broken! And of course, for the deaf children especially, a bright, colorful place is needed as their sight is most important in influencing the way they feel. So we were needed and we were determined to actually brighten this place up!



First we spent a few hours whitening the walls, with some grey through it as well, by mistake of course, but the result was amazing! Although, I guess, most of us would have been a lot more critical about it if it was our

own wall... But then again, just imagine a dirty, broken, ugly colored wall; some white paint does miracles! After a lovely lunch provided by the school, we got the most creative of us, which turned out to be almost all, to paint the sign language alphabet in one classroom and the numbers (in a clock) in the other, together with some decorative flowers and, not to be missed, a monkey hanging on a tree! Next to the beautiful work we all did, we were lucky to have had some of the deaf children themselves helping us in the entrance room. They painted a lovely wall painting and as creative as they are, also a Winnie the Pooh and Piglet!



It was an exhausting day, but it was amazing! I think we have all enjoyed it a lot and we left feeling very satisfied, just the children's surprised and happy faces when they showed it all to each other was so worth all the dust, smelly paint and hard work. These faces are what you all do it for in the end.

Recipe of the Month!

Roti रोटिका

Roti is a flat unleavened bread consumed all over Asia. Best served with any type of curry, particularly potato. Now you have the recipe all you need is the ingredients listed below, so why not give it a try? It may take a few tries to get the hang of it but they will be well worth the effort!

Ingredients:

- 4 cups whole wheat flour, sifted
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 1/2 cup warm milk
- 1/2 cup warm water or as needed
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt



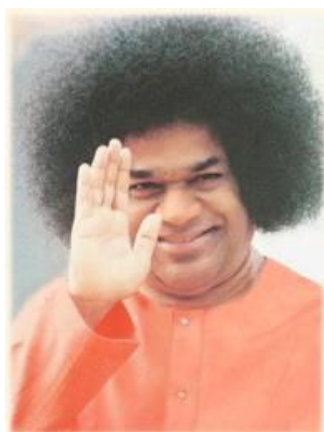
Cooking Instructions:

In a large bowl, combine the flour, melted butter, salt and sugar. Make a well in the centre and add warm water and milk, mixing it with the flour until a soft dough is formed. Dust kneading board with flour; place the dough on the board and knead for ten minutes or so. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest for an hour or so. Divide the dough into three-inch balls. Flatten the dough balls into 6-7 inch circles. Cover with plastic wrap.

Heat a cast -iron skillet on a medium-high heat. Place one roti on the skillet, top-side down and cook for 30 seconds or so. Turn over and cook for another minute until small air pockets emerge. Turn it over once more and cook for another minute. With a lightly-wet towel, press on the roti, forcing it to develop more air pockets. Keep the finished rotis warm in a towel as you continue to prepare others. Serve hot with vegetable or meat preparations.

World News

Death of Sai Baba For millions of people Sathya Sai Baba was one of the most spiritually influential people in the world providing not only guidance and knowledge but also charity in the form of schools, hospitals and other institutions all across India. Despite having a massive following in Asia, particularly in India, he has devotees from all over the world, including Nepal. His pictures can be seen everywhere, his influence very apparent, therefore it is understandable that his death, three weeks ago, has sent many Nepali people into mourning. Our thoughts go out to everyone who is grieving at this time.



Sathya Sai Baba
(insert picture)

23rd November 1926- 24th April 2011

“Love all, serve all, help ever, hurt never.”

Wish Lists

Projects Abroad Nepal’s volunteers often want to bring items out here for their placements but find it hard to know what the different placements need. We’ve put together some ‘wish lists’ for some of the centres and schools to give new volunteers an idea of what is most needed...

DMD Centre
(8 boys aged 10-18)
Games
Bubbles/straws
Clothes
Toothbrushes
THEY LOVE SPIDERMAN!

Physio Placements
Theraband
Gym Balls
Exercise Sheets
'Tuffie' wipes

Snowland Ranag School
(160 kids aged 5-19)
Notebooks/Crayons
Clothes
Shoes
Balls

Surya Vinayak English
Secondary School
Reading books

Anal Jyoti Boarding
School
Notebooks
Pencils/Sharpener
Eraser
Materials for creative
activities

Life Development
Centre
(38 people aged 7-40)
Clothes
Underwear
Socks
Pens, Crayons, Paints
Pillows
Toothbrushes
Soap

Medical Placements
If you are coming to
Nepal to do a
medical placement
then please
remember your lab
coat!!!

NRH/MSPN
Creative Books
Reading material
Clothing
Shoes

Patan & Bhaktapur CBR
Wedge Mats
Floor Mats
Bubble wrap
Blankets
Children's clothes
Games/toys/blocks
Folders/Filing
Medicine Balls
Nappies

Friendship/Happy or J &
K Houses
Reading books
Creative materials
Clothes
Shoes

OR...if you would like to fundraise before you leave for Nepal then we can help you to buy things for your placement whilst you are out here!

What to do in Kathmandu??...

More information on these trips will be given nearer the time so remember to check emails and phones for updates!

**Budhanilkantha
temple trip with
Snowlands
children 11th June**

**LAST
RESORT TRIP
18th-19th June**

**RAFTING
TRIP 25th-26th
June**

If you have a special interest in an activity then get in contact with the team and we can try to organise a group trip to take the pressure off you! And also Hotel excelsior is very happy to arrange trips or transport if you don't fancy what Projects Abroad have organised.

Top Tips for Nepal

- The monsoon season is nearly upon us which inevitably means more rain and higher temperatures. The best advice is to invest in an umbrella, coat or poncho (the latter being not very attractive but very useful!!). Also, try not to lose any footwear (especially flip flops and sandals) when walking along the roads come rivers.
- Along with the rain comes the possibility of more strikes (bandha's) and so remember to keep checking your phones and emails in case of any updates from us. The strikes do not usually concern foreigners however they can cause severe disruption to travel, so when we have any warning of one we will get in contact and tell you the best thing to do. Also these strikes may mean that weekend trips have to be cancelled which is very disappointing but cannot be helped, although we will try our best to rearrange it for another date.